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The Romance of Ancient Coins and Coinage

By Rollo E. Gilmore

The human interest in early metallic money is appalling - From the first book of the bible we learned that coined money was common almost forty centuries ago. Sarah, the wife of Abraham, died eighteen hundred and fifty nine years before Christ, and when Abraham purchased Mich-pelah for a burying-place, on that occasion, he paid therefore, to Ephron the Hittite, "four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchants," says the Bible (Gen. 13:16)

One hundred and thirty years later, Joseph was sold by his brethren to merchants of Median, the money received for him being twenty pieces of silver. This last "transaction" took place more than thirty-six centuries since; and the two sales show that coined money was known, and was in common use not less than four thousand years ago, for the language used implies long established customs in regard to commerce, or what is known in its entirety as business. The money employed was silver, and it is believed that gold was first coined, because it was more readily found and more easily worked. Ages before the Greeks coined money, it must have been familiar to the oriental peoples. It is recorded that Abraham had gold as well as silver among his possessions.

The exact dates of the striking of the first Grecian coins are not known. It is probable, however, that the earliest coins known to the Greeks were of Asiatic origin, and perhaps came from Lydia, made from gold of Pactolus. We know that the common story that money was first coined at Argos rests on insufficient evidence. There were coins in Greece in the eighth century before Christ, probably of foreign origin. Centuries later, much of the money in Greece was from foreign mints. The Daricns commonly called the Daric, a Persian gold coin of great purity, furnished much of the circulation of Greece, and is mentioned in Grecian History. Its origin is not known with precision. Darius, the father of Xerxes, is generally given the credit, in the sixth century before Christ, being no longer received. We think it was much older than Darins Hystaspes, though he reformed the Persian currency.

The first gold coin of Greece was called "Stater", or standard. It was coined in several places, Greece being a land of many small cities. Silver formed the current money of Greece down to a late date, gold being exceptional, and coming from abroad. Athens is supposed to have had no gold coinage toward the beginning of the last third of the fifth century before Christ, and yet Athens was then the most enlightened country in the world and carried on the greatest commerce that was known to the Greeks. Athens had foreign gold coins, just as in the early part of the 17th century much of the hard money in this country was from Spanish mints. The silver mines at Laurion had much effect on the silver money, which was very pure. The silver Talent belonged to the money of account. The gold Talent contained more than three-fourths of an ounce of gold, bronze and copper were also used.

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THE ROMANCE OF ANCIENT COINS AND COINAGE

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Gold coinage began in Greece during the reign of Philip, father of Alexander the Great, the latter died in 323 B. C. It was Alexander's war in the East which had the effect of bringing into use immense masses of gold, the spoils of victory, therefore the history of gold coinage is closely associated with Macedonian monarchs. With gold becoming common, the states of Greece, then in their decline, probably imitated their powerful neighbor and master. A few of the Greek communities, of which Thasos was the most noted, had a gold coinage early, because they possessed gold mines; and the flourishing Samios had such coinage before the rise of Athens.

The first Roman silver was struck about 352 B. C. and the first gold about 207 B. C. The Roman auri were at first, forty to the pound, but were reduced to forty-five at the close of the Republican period. The earlier Roman coinage was of bronze or copper and it shows how little advance has been made by that great people which according to the best authorities it was not until their fifth century that they had silver coinage and two more generations elapsed before gold was introduced. The most prosperous period of Rome was in the years that followed the introduction of silver and about fifteen years before the appearance of home-struck gold. It is a remarkable fact that the Second Punic War the greatest contest in which the Romans ever were involved, was more than half over before the Roman mint had turned its attention to gold. The Romans were not a trading people in an extended sense, and the Greeks were. The Romans were a money getting race, but their chief pursuits were agriculture and war. It was among the prominent causes of the decline that they accumulated only through conquest; so that when conquest ceased their fall became inevitable.

The first step from barbarism among all peoples has been the striking of "hard money": and the highest evidence of civilization is to be found in the purity of money, because upon that largely depends the happiness of mankind, particularly that of the producing classes who are the first to suffer from any tampering with the currency. The only money that is now universally recognized is that made of gold and silver. Paper as an agent is of immense value, and of inestimable convenience, but is not money according to the received ideas, it cannot be converted into coined money if to much of it exists at the same time.

Today there is a much larger amount of gold and silver in use than in any earlier time. The quantity of the precious metals had greatly lessened at the close of the fifteenth century. Then occurred the discovery of America which had the effect of adding considerably to the quantity of gold and of immensely increasing that of silver. Russia became the chief gold producing country in the nineteenth century, but lost that rank when the California mines were discovered. Then came the discovery of gold in Australia and Alaska. The effect of these discoveries and some lesser ones, is very great and on the whole it is good.

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It would be interest to collectors to see the current Pathe Newsreel which shows the mint striking the new Washington Quarters.

The complete process of striking these coins from the melting of the old silver to finished coin.

It is the first time in history that a movie has ever been made of the mint striking money. Now we know the long awaited Washington quarter will so make its appearance.

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In 1824 Abraham Lincoln, then fifteen, scribbled a four line verse on the fly leaf of his battered arithmetic. Last month the same leaf sold at auction for \$400.

The leaf was from the collection of the late Henry M. Leland, the inventor of the Lincoln auto.

Another item which inspired lively bidding was the fee book of the Lincoln and Herndon law firm for the year of 1847. It sold for \$245. A letter written to Illinois Central Railroad, which Lincoln represented in a law suit in 1854, brought \$475.

An autograph of John Wilkes Booth, Lincoln's assassin, went for \$50.

A considerable part of the collection was purchased for the Brown University at Providence, R. I.

The Auction this month has a lot of stamps, send in a few bids.

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COINS AND STAMPS

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Chicago Souvenir Penny	.35
Lucky Cent, Lapel Pin, Lincoln	
Lucky Cent Lapel Pin,	.50
Washington	.50
Celluloid Button Collection, portrait of Presidents etc. each	15
Columbian 1893 Half Dollar	.75
U. S. Half Cent, .40; Two cent	.20
U.S. One Cent .15; 3 cent nickel	.15
Ten Foreign Coin Collection	.25
Washington Medalets Bust type	.20
Washington Medalets	
as a mason	.25
California Souvenir Gold	
\$ $\frac{1}{4}$ size	.35
California Souvenir	
Gold \$ $\frac{1}{2}$.75
Coin Envelope 2" x 2"	
celluloid, each	.05
Coin Envelopes 2" x 2"	
glassine or kraft per 100	.20
Stamp Album, 4000 cap and	
100 stamps	.50
Standard Coin Book, prices paid on U.S. coins and paper money and Canadian coins	.25

General coin price list sent for 2c stamp.

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Facimilie of Negro Slave Bill of Sale 50c. C. Gilmore, 7453 Dominician Ave., New Orleans, La.

Nebr. Overprint Stamps - - 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c Mint Sheets, \$1.95. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Write for prices on other overprints. Fred Gruenhagen, Martland, Nebraska,

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Free List of U.S. Silver, Copper, Commemoratives, Hard Times Tokens, Specials, Genuine California Gold quarters, halves and dollars. Write for Free Lists. Send your want lists for medals. Correspondence Solicited.—Kenneth W. Lee 623 Security Bldg., Glendale, Cal.

July Special - Scarce 1922 Lincoln cents, 5 for \$1.00 Look like new. Unc. 1909 VBD cent free with each order. Nickel 3c-3 dfferent dates, 25c. Unc. Wood money of Tenino, Washington 25c Size, 40c. Fred Gruenhagen, Martland, Nebraska.

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Wanted worthless stock certificates 1921 Pilgrim Com. Half Dollars. R. Ostengaard 5711 Christiana St. Chicago, Illinois.

I want old mustache cups describe and price. Harris, 5450 N. Clark Chicago

SWAP ADS

Advertising under this heading is restricted to exchanges. Rate $\frac{1}{2}$ cent per word. Minimum 10c. No check copies furnished. Cash with copy.

Exchange cacheted airmail covers. Cover for cover. Send 5 to 20 different and get the same number in exchange. Walter Brooke, Boyertown, Pa.

Ten foreign coins for every half cent sent me. Thelma Miller 627 $\frac{1}{2}$ Arlington Pl., Chicago, Ill.

Ten foreign coins for five metal street car tokens. Gilmore, 4243 Sheridan, Chicago, Illinois.

Stamps swapped stamp for stamp, or Scott's catalogue. Old U. S. Post-Cards to swap for U.S. commemoratives. George Metcalf Jr., Lansing, Iowa.

Indian Stone Relics, Books Wars, Presidents McGuffeys, Den Relics. Want Old Glass Buttons, Gobets, Arrowheads, etc. Charles Patrick, Mt. Victory, Ohio

Indian Head Cents Wanted. Will give 1893 Columbian Half Dollar for 75 Indian Heads. J. R. Miller, 221 N. Michigan, Chicago.

Indian Relics, Land Grants and Curios, to swap for other Curios. No stamps. D. R. Smedly, Star R Rushville, Illinois.

Transportation tokens exchanged. Gilmore, 4243 Sheridan, Chicago

Will swap duplicate Golden Hours for needed numbers. Or old circus material., Pitzer, 41 Woodlawn Avenue, Jersey City, New Jersey.

Large cents for Match Covers or ? Cadwell, 6336 N. Paulina Chicago

ILLINOIS TRADER

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Forms close 20th of each month

Wooden Nickels! Now "Oyster Money"

Not to be out done by their neighbors, Tenino, who issued the wood money, the Chamber of Commerce of Raymond, Wash. has issued "Oyster Money" which will be used as legal tender in that city. \$30,000 of this strange money has been put in circulation. Deposits in defunct First Willpa Harbor National Bank is the security.

No doubt in a few weeks dealers will be offering this scrip to coin collectors. It appear that the people of Washington will liquidate their closed banks at the expense of the collectors as the scrip in the hands of collectors will never be redeemed.

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Following are some of our specials:

200 different foreign coins	2.00
10 U.S. half cents	2.00
30 U.S. copper cents	1.00
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20 U.S. 3c nickel	1.00
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New 3-cent Stamp Panama Pill Coin

An entirely new 3-cent stamp was issued June 16 for ordinary postage. It is dark violet in color and in design is the same as the 2c bicentennial stamp except for the color and the value and the deleting of the dates 1732-1932. The stamp will also be issued in coils of 500, 1,000 and 3,000 sideways and later on in rolls of 500 endwise, also in booklet form.

Famous Collectors In Washington

A well known society editor states that to be truly smart in Washington one must collect something. Here are some of the collectors:

Mrs. Hoover, antique furniture, Mrs. Gann, elephant statues, the ambassador from Chile, Cruchaga has a nice stamp collection, the wife of Senator Keyes has a large collection of fans and dolls, one of the finest oriental collections in the country is that of Mrs. Borah, the wife of the well known senator.

The fish hawkers, gamblers and lower class of people of Siam years ago used porcelain money now very scarce.

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Lee F. Hewitt

1549 Hood Ave.

Chicago

The discovery of the Pacific was a worthy enterprise and to commemorate this event the Republic of Panama struck a miniature coin. The exact size is 10mm in diameter and the thickness of our nickel.

The memory of Balboa is honored with a portrait of the discoverer on one side, and on the other is the shield of the Republic. However, the lettering is barely decipherable with the naked eye. A more microscopic coin was probably never minted than this token for two and half cents. It is a wonder, that most of Panama's money must disappear from circulation when they have to use a magnifying glass to find it.

Famed Caesar Bust a Fraud

The famous British Museum bust of Julius Caesar, has been officially recognized as a forgery.

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AUCTION

Items listed here will be sold to the highest bidder without reserve. Bid by the lot, not by the piece. When two bids on the same lot are the same the first received gets the lot. Bids received until July 15th. No charge is made for executing bids but you pay postage. Send references with your bids. A printed price list of prices realized will be available July 20th for 10c. Send in your duplicates to be sold, the commission charge is 15%.

Keep on the mailing list by bidding each month.

BOOKS, NEWSPAPERS, ETC.

1. Anniversary Edition of Daily Bulletin, Manila, P. I. May 1, 1904. About 100 halftones, 56 pages, very good.
2. Manila Times, October 25, 1913, 20 pages, very good.
3. Invitation to the Inaugural Ball at Manila, Nov. 24, 1909 9 x 12 in original envelope, suitable for framing, fine.
4. Two old books, no covers, Leather Stocking Tales and a volume short stories, nice wood cuts, condition fair.
5. Report on Philippine Islands by Brant Trent, April 27, 1903 an original typewritten copy, 95 pages, interesting, fine.
6. Record of Indiana Volunteers in Spanish American War, cloth bound, 368 pages, condition fine.
7. Ancient Israelites, printed 1832, 283 pages, nice condition.

STAMPS

8. Strip of 4 U.S. 4169, fine, catalog \$2.40.
9. Block of 4 Cilicia 86, used very fine, cat. \$3.00.
10. Used pair Egypt 421, catalog \$1.50.
11. 11 fine copies France 182, catalog \$2.75.
12. 22 fine copies France 186, catalog \$2.20
13. 5 lightly canceled Gr. Brit. off. Hong Kong 11 cat. \$2.50
14. Pair Hong Kong 59, used nice cancellation, cat. \$2.00.
15. Lourenzo Margues 11, used and rare, catalog \$1.75.
16. 27 fine copies Netherlands 21, catalog \$1.62.
17. Mint block of 10 Paraguay 241, catalog \$1.50.
18. Siam 173 and 174, used and rare, catalog \$5.50.
19. Transvaal 98 and 101, used, catalog \$2.00.
20. Transvaal 102, 2 copies slight defective, catalog \$12.00.
21. Transvaal 132-133-134, unused, catalog \$2.85.
22. Victoria 121a, 2 used copies, catalog \$6.00.
23. Mint sheet of 100 Persia 53, catalog \$25.00.
24. Mint sheet 1½c Kansas overprint, issue 1929, cat. \$6.25
25. Mint sheet 1c Kansas overprint, catalog \$5.00.

AUCTION CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

AUCTION CONTINUED

INDIAN RELICS

- 26. 4 common jasper hide scrapers, from Washington.
- 27. 25 common Arkansas bird points, fair only.
- 28. 25 common Arkansas arrowheads, about average.
- 29. 47 California whole shell beads.
- 30. 45 California wampum beads.
- 31. 50 grave beads from California mound.

COINS AND BILLS

- 32. 2 sheets of 4 uncirculated Bank of Augusta \$5.00 bills.
- 33. 14 unc. Hungarian Fund 1. 2 and 5 forint bills.
- 34. 5 German 10,000 mark bills, unc.
- 35. 10 State of Ala. 10c, 25c and 50c bills, fine and unc.
- 36. 10 50c Confederate bills, very fair and good.
- 37. 27 Misc. Confederate, Broken Bank, etc., v. fair to good.
- 38. 4 State of Louisiana \$5.00 bills, fine.
- 39. 25 Confederate \$5, \$10 and \$20 bills, good to fine.
- 40. 4 Unc. Virginia Treas. \$1.00 bills.
- 41. 5 large cents, 1810 to 1820, fair.
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- 45. 100 common copper and nickel foreign coins, duplicates.
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- 50. 1918 Illinois half dollar, very fine.
- 51. 1851 Gold Dollar, solder mark, other wise good.
- 52. 1863 S half dime, only 1000 coined, very good.
- 53. 1916 S Dimes 1916-17-18-19-20. uncirculated
- 54. 1916-17-18-19 Phil. Lincoln cents, uncirculated.
- 55. 1903 U.S. Philippine Island silver peso, very fine.
- 56. 50 Indian cents 1890 to 1909, duplicates, good to fine.
- 56. 1828 half cents, 12 and 13 stars, good and very good.
- 57. 10 Large cents, 1797 to 1803, fair plain dates.
- 58. 5 1922 Lincoln cents, fine.
- 59. 1871-72-73-74 Indian cents, good.
- 60. 25 Large cents, fair, good, some holed.

Send bids to

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